

KJCK Spotlight
Thursday, April 12, 2007

Good morning, I'm Cynthia Dierks, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Park Ranger with the Milford Lake Update.

Ok....for all of the naysayers out there.....you know who they are, the ones who said the lake would never rise again and they should put their boats and fishing equipment up for sale.....well as I write this and look out the window.....it's still raining. Our lowest elevation this winter was recorded at 1137.65 mean sea level on December 29th. That was 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ feet below normal pool level which was still .8 of a foot from setting a new record low. That may not sound like much of a difference but when you consider a 15,709 surface acre lake....that's a lot of water! With the current elevation we have gained back $\frac{1}{2}$ of the earlier loss. Don't sell the boat and get those rods and reels ready. At 51 degrees it may not be warm enough to go swimming but the walleye are coming.....

Another thing that's coming is camping season. The Corps campgrounds open this weekend on Sunday, April 15th. Curtis Creek, West Rolling Hills and Farnum Creek will be open for business! School Creek and Timber Creek, which have been open for primitive "free" camping all winter will switch over to primitive camping for the nominal price of \$8.00/night. Why the difference since they are both primitive camping year around? Well as soon as the weather straightens out and goes from freezing temperatures to more seasonal weather, we will turn on the water! The Corps of Engineers is not allowed to charge a camping fee in areas that have no water. Oh, and the good news....camping prices didn't go up, they're the same as last year.

Don't forget for those of you who like to make campsite reservations, you can reserve sites in both Curtis Creek and West Rolling Hills campgrounds. You can either call the toll free number 877-444-6777 or go to the new website at www.Recreation.gov. You can reserve a site 240 days before your arrival!

What may be confusing this year are the discount card programs. As of January 1, 2007 the Golden Age and Golden Access discount cards are no longer issued by the Federal Government. They are still accepted as the cards were issued as life time passes and are valid throughout the lifetime of the cardholder. There is a new program that was initiated on January 1, 2007 called the *America the Beautiful – the National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Pass*. Unfortunately the Corps of Engineers was not given the authority to sell or issue these new passes. We will honor two of the new passes, the *Senior Pass* and the *Access Pass*. If you are as confused at this point as I suspect you may be, please call our office or stop by and we would be more than happy to further explain this change to you. Our telephone number is 785-238-5714 and dial 0 for assistance.

So shine up the boat, get the camper ready but remember....it's too cold to go swimming! Your safety around cold water is our concern. That's the Milford Lake Update.